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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 001899

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/29/13

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [BT](#) [NP](#) [NL](#) [UNHCR](#)

SUBJECT: BHUTAN: DUTCH CONCERNS ABOUT BHUTANESE REFUGEES IN NEPAL

REF: A. SECSTATE 215687

1B. THE HAGUE 374

Classified By: A/PolCouns Nathaniel Dean Reasons 1.5 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) On July 29 PolOff conveyed reftel to MFA South Asia Senior Policy Advisors Arjen Kool and Robert Claessens. Kool and Claessens noted the similarity between reftel and the July 18 EU statement on Bhutan. The GoNL remains concerned about the situation of the Bhutanese refugees, especially the current lack of an adequate appeals process for those refugees classified as having left Bhutan voluntarily. The Dutch Ambassador to India communicated EU concerns to Bhutanese officials at a meeting earlier this month. The Dutch MFA also conveyed concerns locally in the Hague to the Bhutanese Honorary Consul. The GoNL does not have further bilateral meetings planned at this time.

¶2. (C) The Dutch would like to see greater UN involvement in the resettlement process. Kool reported that the Danes approached the RGOB recently to urge greater cooperation with, among others, UNHCR, UNDP, and UNICEF. Kool said the RGOB response was positive, but no promises were made.

¶3. (C) Note: To date, Dutch financial assistance to Bhutan focuses primarily on environmental projects (ref B). While earlier this year the MFA considered whether or not to reallocate funding to refugee programs, Kool reports it currently has no plans to do so. End Note.
RUSSEL